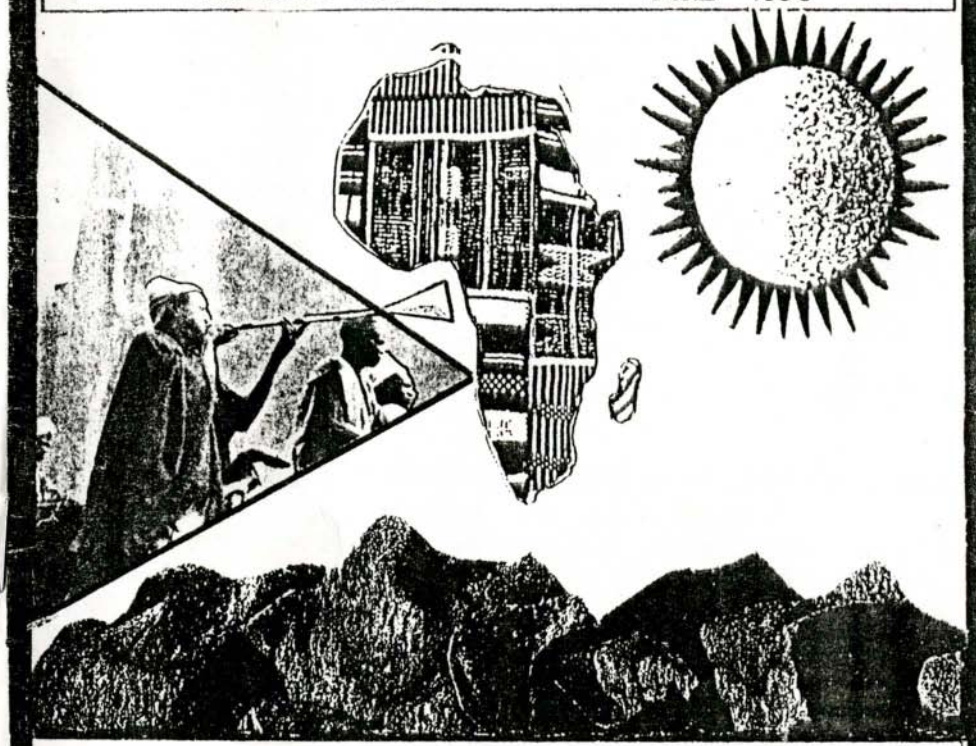
HARAMBEE FLAME

VOL. XVII No. 6 JUNE 1996



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HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Alaga(Chairman) - Shaheed Khaleel Hamza

Eso/Alakoso asha(Sgt.-at-Arms/Chairman of Cultural Affairs Committee) - Kenny Walker

Eleto(Admin. Chrmn.) - Nbassa Courtney Starks

Olotu Eko(Education Chrmn.) - Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa

Akapo(Treasurer) - Tyrone Hayes

Akowe(Secretary) - Dexter Brown

Akewi(Librarian) - Neb-Ankh-Amen(Howard Nash)

Congratulations to these newly elected members of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Org. Central Committee.

HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION CREED

Together we seek to know that which is us, to expand our collective consciousness of who we are and whence we come. We exalt in the fact that Afrikans are beautiful in our own right, rather than at the expense of any other ethnic group. And in the true spirit of the Swahili word, "harambee," we promote the idea that cultural awareness is germane to human growth.

Commentary

In a shooting war, the opposing forces use guns. There is a cliche, popularized by the National Rifle Association, "Guns don't kill people. People kill people." And to the extent that guns can't squeeze their own triggers, the cliche is valid. But we can take this to another level. Typically, those who wage war don't use guns as bludgeons, beating their enemies to death, or as projectiles, throwing them at the intended victims. It is the **bullets** fired from the guns that bring injury and death.

In psychological warfare, the human voice(delivered directly to listeners or through radio, television, or tape) and the print media are the guns. The words that are said or written are the bullets. And whether we're talking about the material bullets of a shooting war or the allegorical bullets of psychological war, all bullets have two things in common. Obviously, they can cause physical or psychological injury or death; and they can be used by **anyone.**

In a shooting war, each side recognizes that anyone can use bullets and so it safeguards its ammunition so that it doesn't get into the hands of the other side. This is fundamental. But somehow, some of us fail to see that, just as material bullets can be used by anyone, the allegorical bullets can also. Operating on the basis of this failure, some of us leave ammo lying around anywhere, with the result that our own bullets get used against us.

How is this possible? Are some of us stupid? Probably. But there is something else at work. At the same time that we Africans in the U.S. are under attack from this country's Caucasian-supremacist system, we are also involved in skirmishes among ourselves. So if one of us leaves some ammo lying around and it is picked up and used by that system against a Sister or Brother of ours with whom we've been engaged in a skirmish, we take the attitude that this is either of no consequence for us or that an **enemy** of ours has been fired upon and we cheer the shot.

At present, Louis Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam are

At present, Louis Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam are under attack by the 700 Club. The Club is firing bullets of psychological warfare--words, their own words, accusing the Muslim leader of claiming to be the Second Coming. At the same time, some African preachers are doing more than just leaving ammo lying around. They're turning it--their own words--over to the 700 Club. We are seeing similar uses of our ammo in the case of C. Delores Tucker in her attacks against gangsta rappers, in that of Thomas Sowell in his attacks against proponents of Africentric education, and in many other cases.

Pshychological warfare is being waged against us. The U.S. Caucasian-supremacist system has its guns(the human voice and the electronic and print media) aimed at us, but, in particular, at those of us it views as being leaders and as posing the greatest immediate or potential threats to its power. Being under attack, we consider and debate various strategies and tactics by which to defend ourselves. Beyond that, like any other group of people, we have disagreements and friction based on personality clashes, jealousies, etc. With all this, we have to struggle and try to bring these disagreements and friction to a minimum so that our solidarity can be brought to a maximum.

In our internal struggles, we have to have a standard by which to determine when it is necessary for us to use words as bullets against each other. That standard should be that we only use words as bullets when an African is functioning as an enemy, when he or she is knowingly and/or recklessly acting on behalf of or in the interest of the Caucasian-supremacist system, and when his or her actions are endangering us. In addition to using this standard in deciding when to use bullets, we should actually use them according to this principle: that the bullets be fired from our own guns. In other words, we should employ our own meeting places, our own newspapers or magazines, our own radio or t.v. stations or programs, etc. when we must go on the attack against enemies in our midst. The reason for this is twofold: Collective self-respect requires us to use our own means to take care of our own business; and we have to get accustomed to relying on ourselves instead of on those whom too many of us think of as our "masters."

Returning to the standard by which we decide whether to fire

words as bullets against one of our own, we have no right to treat an African as an enemy just because we disagree with his or her attitudes, approaches to solving problems, emphases on aspects of particular situations, etc. We should recall that Omowale(Malcolm X) stopped attacking Martin Luther King after he came to the conclusion that, despite his objections to King's philosophy of non-violence and his apparent belief in Caucasians' "goodness," his ultimate objective and King's were the same. They both wanted freedom and prosperity for our people. Furthermore, Omowale realized that he and King were important leaders of their people and that his attacking of King could be used by the Caucasian-supremacist system in its own anti-King agenda; and he understood that a group's internal squabbles sap strength needed for our life-and-death war with a real enemy.

If we look back at the conflict between the Black Panther Party and the Maulana Karenga-led organization, Us, we can see that the essential conflict was one between an emphasis on politics and an emphasis on culture--two aspect of human activity that are not mutually exclusive. The two organizations could have met and decided that both of their respective areas of concentration were worthy of African people's energy and that they could complement each other. Instead, they used bullets--both material and verbal--against each other and nobody won but the F.B.I. and other institutions of the U.S. Caucasian-supremacist system.

On the other hand, when there are Africans--such as Shelby Steele, Thomas Sowell, et al--who are functioning as hit-men for Caucasian bosses, as they attack Africentric education, they should get what their hands call for. We should use our allegorical bullets against them in order to expose them before our people for what they are: slaves doing their masters' bidding, enemies in our midst. These and other defenders of their masters' status quo should not be welcomed among us.

But what about those gangsta rappers who demean African girls and women, promote the idea that any of us are fair game when the hunt for money is on, and/or otherwise devalue our lives? They, too, are functioning as enemies to us and acting out of enslavement to Europeans' ruthless materialism and individualism. What separates them from the political

hit-men for Caucasian bosses is that they tend to be "young and dumb." They are astute enough to know what sells in the music marketplace but tend to know little or nothing about the on-going history of our struggle against domination by Europeans/Caucasians and to know even less about our history prior to colonialism, slavery, etc. Despite their apparent disregard for our collective welfare, they are our people and are under attack by the same enemy that attacks us all. Because, to a significant degree, these young Africans don't know better, we owe it to them and ourselves as a whole to try to help them get their heads right. Also, like our young gang-bangers, while they are clearly misguided, many of them do hate the Caucasian-supremacist system.

We are in the midst of bullets flying all over the place, both literally and figuratively. And too many of these bullets are both being targeted at us and by us. We have to be selective in whom we target and not fall prey to spending energy on counter-productive fights. Every skirmish in our internal struggles makes us more vulnerable to attacks from the outside: a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. Yet every situation we allow in which our own act on behalf of the Caucasian-supremacist system also increases our vulnerability.

Our task is to be Brothers and Sisters to each other and, at the same time, hold ourselves and each other accountable to a high standard of Brotherhood and Sisterhood. In this holding each other accountable, as spoken of earlier, we will sometimes have to go on the attack. But a man or a woman uses his or her own words as bullets and his or her own gun. It is a boy or a girl who carries his or her bullets to the enemy and asks to use that enemy's gun. In this struggle, we cannot afford to be boys and girls.

-Mondo

FLAME Editorial Policy

The HARAMBEE FLAME is the monthly newsletter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization(Nebraska State Pen chapter). Ours is a pan-Africanist publication, meaning that we view all people of African descent as one African people, having certain basic interests in common. Also, the HARAMBEE FLAME attempts to be Africentric, in that, through study of the history, cultures, and traditional values of African people, we seek to have and cultivate an African way of looking at things.

The main purposes of the HARAMBEE FLAME are to stimulate and inform. We list "stimulate" first because, more than anything else, we want our readers to be moved to question their-your own ideas, lives, and the circumstances in which we live and to challenge those things that must be challenged in order for us to move from a condition of mental and spiritual servitude and physical dependence upon Caucasian institutions to a state of collective self-determination. Toward this purpose, we present commentaries, poems, etc. These do not necessarily represent the official positions of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization.

The HARAMBEE FLAME provides information because wise people want to know what's going on and because certain kinds of information can stimulate the mind, inspire people to want to act, and influence them to pursue proper understanding so that the actions they take will be as effective as possible. The main vehicle we use to provide information is our "From Other Sources" feature in which we make an effort to provide news about the problems we African people are confronted by and the steps we are taking to resolve them. In this feature, we try to provide coverage of the activities of African people and developments affecting us in the U.S., the nations of Africa, and elsewhere. "Community News" is another vehicle.

We encourage you to submit your reports, essays, poems, etc. Please enclose stamped, self-addressed return envelope.

From Other Sources

Doing For Self Materializing In Chicago

"During the close of Black History Month, seven Black businesses pledged to recycle $10 million dollars by giving all their business to Black-owned J & J Meat Company located on Chicago's southside.

"The seven businesses withdrew their combined spending power from white meat suppliers at a breakfast meeting Feb. 29...

"The contract, born from the business alliance of Straight Talk Economic Roundtable(S.T.E.R.), was developed to fulfill the need for more 'Black with Black' business instead of 'Black on Black' crime, said spokesman Morgan Carter. Blacks as a whole in Chicago spend roughly $25 billion yearly, said the group...

"Possible benefits of the agreement include more jobs, lower prices for meat shoppers, and the reality of the dollar turning over more times in the Black community, said Mr. Edward Bassette of B-Elegant Men's Store and president of S.T.E.R....

"The alliance plans two more agreements of similar dollar value to materialize this year. Other programs S.T.E.R. had developed involve churches and civil rights organizations, who receive three percent rebates on all receipts returned to S.T.E.R. proving they shopped with members of the alliance.

"S.T.E.R. business alliance organized about 15 months ago with the objective of getting more Black businesses to shop with one another for the improvement of the quality of life in the Black community. Membership presently involves over 100 businesses...

"With a more than '100 member family trading base, who are obligated to submit 10 new members who will shop in the consortium, then 1,100 members will be spending together', said Mr. Lillard[Senior Executive Producer of Star Planet

Television]..."

-from "Coalition Steers Resources to Black Businesses," page 9, April 30 THE FINAL CALL(Chicago, IL.)

Academy For Africans In Detroit Deals With Hostilities

"In the four years since Malcolm X Academy was established it has met with nothing but hostility from the neighboring Warrendale community.

"Before being assigned to that location, after having shared a building with another school, Dr. Clifford Watson had no idea that the white community would react in such ways to an all-Black institution. The Detroit School Board claimed ignorance of this, as well, but in light of the protests and harassment received since the school's inception, Dr. Watson believes some school board members knew the type of atmosphere that awaited the school...

"The educator hopes to move to a Black neighborhood where residents would be more receptive to an African-centered curriculum...

"Students have been verbally harassed by drivers-by and threatened with guns. Shots have been fired onto the playground, swastikas and gang graffiti painted on the building and buses have been the target of egg-throwing. The school has received bomb threats, and Dr. Watson has been approached and personally threatened along with a school board member.

"Malcolm X Academy has withstood a number of attempts to derail it including a sexual discrimination lawsuit filed by the National Organization of Women because the academy was originally all-male--females are now 15 percent of students--and another lawsuit filed in protest of funds raised at a scholarship benefit featuring the Honoroable Min. Louis Farrakhan as keynote speaker...

"Dr. Watson is receiving help from supporters of the academy. Groups and organizations that have come to the front line are the Million Man Alumni, who made the initial call for outside assistance, the parents committee of Malcolm X

Academy, Brothers on Patrol, Save Our Black Brothers, Operation Get Down, JoAnn Watson of the Detroit-NAACP, and the Detroit School Board is among those joining the ranks...

"'If local officials do not protect us, then we'll protect ourselves **by any means necessary**', he[Dr. Watson] said."

-from "Hostile Whites Threaten Black Academy In Detroit," page 10, April 30 THE FINAL CALL

Blues On Blues: Cultural Imperialism In The U.S.

[There is] "a great cultural shift in America in which the primary economic and cultural support for the blues has moved from African-Americans--who created and nurtured the music for decades--to Whites. Since the early 1960s, Whites have gained a virtual monopoly over every aspect of the blues...

"Nowhere, however, is the shift of control of the blues more evident than in Chicago, long considered the home of the blues after migration of Black blues musicians from the Deep South during the 1930s and '40s. 'In Chicago, the major blues clubs are White. The audiences are White. The recording companies are White. All the blues magazines are White. The scholarship is White, and those writing the history of and producing the blues are White', explains Sterling D. Plumpp, a professor of English and African-American Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago...

"The reasons for the co-opting of the blues are rooted in White control of the entertainment industry. But there also are complex reasons rooted in the Black experience. Blues lost much of its popularity during a period of strict moral standards, when Black religious leaders and churchgoers considered it 'devil music', appreciated only by the low class and raunchy. Blacks, ashamed of the blues, abandoned it, leaving a vacuum of support later to be filled by Whites.

"In addition, blues is no longer played regularly on major Black commercial radio stations, in part, because of changing musical tastes. Says Billy Branch, a premier harmonica

player, 'At least two generations of Blacks have grown up without knowing anything at all about the blues'...

"The reason cited most often for the decline of interest among Blacks is the absence of blues on commercial radio. None of the major commercial radio stations in Chicago plays blues during prime-time hours, though one, WGCI-AM, does have a late Saturday night blues show...Of Chicago's five Black-owned stations, only WSSD-FM regularly plays blues during day and evening hours...

"The University of Illinois' Plumpp says he sees signs that Blacks are reclaiming the music. He notes the efforts of Black theater companies in Chicago, one of them founded by [Val] Ward, which produce 'bluesicals' based on the lives of blues legends. He also points to the blues-inspired works of playwright August Wilson, such as 'Ma Rainey's Black Bottom'..."

"The loudest, most frequent complaint from blues singers is about the poor pay and working conditions at most Chicago clubs...Singers command anywhere from $75 to $125 a night. Those with bigger names earn more. A source says bands at most North Side clubs earn from $700 to $800 a night. A big-name star like Koko Taylor makes about $3500 a night, according to one club owner. On the South and West sides, however, performers fare far worse: $25 for a singer, $100 for a four-piece band.

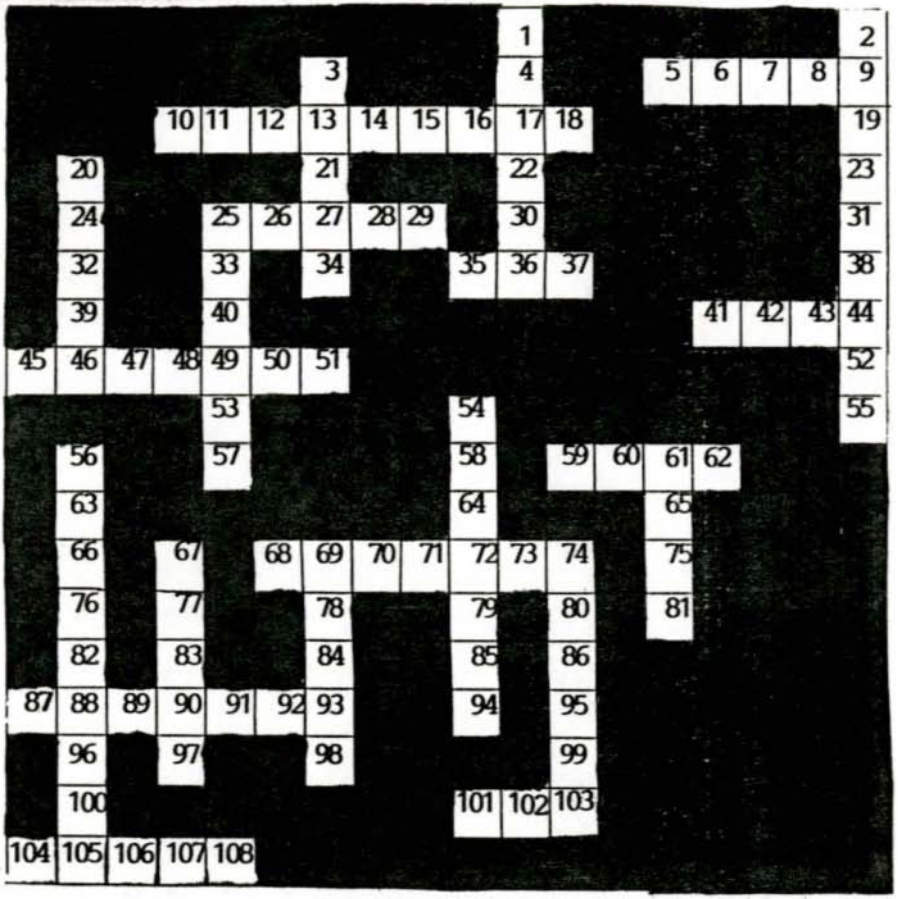
"About five years ago, there was an ill-fated effort to organize blues singers and musicians to demand more money, more respect and better working conditions from club owners and promoters. The prime mover of the Chicago Blues Coalition was the late Valerie Wellington, a singer with an international reputation...

"..Wellington, who died in 1993 from a brain aneurism, wanted to include any blues club employee who felt exploited. The musicians balked, claiming ther needs were separate. The Coalition died a quiet death without making much headway."

-from: "Black And White Blues" and "A Bluesman's Blues," pages 50-56, June EMERGE(Washington, D.C.)

Editor's note: The north side is predominantly Caucasian.

Africentric Crossword Puzzle #11 - Questions



Across

5-"Another mule kickin' in my _____" is a line from one of the most popular songs performed by Muddy Waters.

10-Clarence "_____" Brown retains the Southern/rural influences in his blues performances.

25-J.B. _____and the Hawks are a popular group in the Chicago blues scene.

36-The twelve-_____ blues is a standard format.

41-"I Can't _____You, Baby" is one of the more well-

-known cuts by Otis Rush.

45-BLUES FOR MR. _____ is a play written by James Baldwin which deals with sex in "race" relations.

59-_____ joints were once the places for listening to recorded blues.

68-Clifton _____, who died in 1987, was known as the "King of Zydeco."

87-Albert _____, like Freddie King and Luther Allison, et al, is known for his high-powered guitar playing.

101-This Chicago-based bluesman, (last name)_____, has been commonly associated with fellow-bluesman, Junior Wells.

104-"They call me Mr. Clean Head just cuz my head is bald" is a line from a song by _____ Vinson.

Down

1-Saxophonist Archie Shepp wrote and performed "_____ Blues" in tribute to men whose lives were taken in an early-seventies armed assault on prisoners demanding humane treatment.

2-_____ Records, though owned by Caucasians, may be the best known current blues record label.

3-Blues is generally recognized as having had its origins in the Mississippi _____.

20- (last name)_____was known as the "Empress of the Blues."

25-This blues singer got the name, "_____ Wolf" because of his singing style.

54-"_____" is the name of B.B. King's guitar.

56-The modified _____ is employed as an instrument in many zydeco bands.

61-_____ Taylor is one of the most popular of today's female blues vocalists.

67-The _____ hollers are cited as being veritable ancestors of blues.

69-"Red _____" is probably the best known of the few blues numbers by the great guitarist, Jimi Hendrix.

74-Ma _____ was called "Mother of the Blues."

****

Kuumba (Creativity)

OMAHA 1996

a cop has died
blond-haired and pale
in his cruiser at the wheel
where bullets crashed through glass
that failed to shield his life
from lead that flew too fast for him to duck
a van of teenaged African males
the cop had stopped
a familiar scene
young boys-to-men caught up
in a police routine
a check to see if the van was hot
or warrants for arrest were locked inside
a computer that would spill its beans
to this officer of the law and order
of those who call the shots
how many times that we have seen
the young ones on the pavement
their faces down and backs beneath the knees
of those with badges and guns in place
of ropes and kerosene
someone in that van
confused and scared
or driven by a fatalistic urge
so common of the streets
yanked the trigger on his gun repeatedly

(Cont. inside back cover)

COMMUNITY NEWS

The prison chapter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization held a special meeting on May 4th. at 6 p.m., featuring Rev. Nwaka Chris Egbulem. Rev. Egbulem had conducted a five-hour workshop on Africentric Catholic worship earlier in the day at Flanagan High School in Omaha but was still energetic and enthused enough to come here to Lincoln and speak before our organization.

Rev. Egbulem, born and raised in Nigeria, resides in Washington, D.C., where he is director of Amen Ministries. He is author of the book, THE POWER OF AFRICENTRIC CELEBRATIONS. Accompanying the speaker were Brothers Richard Watson and Ernest Spicer from Omaha, members of the National Black Catholic Congress.

Rev. Egbulem spoke for about twenty five minutes and then answered questions. He brought it to our attention that civilization, as well as the Christian Church, started in Africa and that it is a gift from God to be African--no matter where we are, in Africa or in the Diaspora. As he put it, "No one can purchase African identity." He reminded us of the hard work of our ancestors, who deserve and command our respect and that we should always continue to grow, develop, and learn from each other by listening to what our Sisters and Brothers have to say. And he made a point of stressing the importance of our learning to live with our differences because no one person can fully comprehend God. He also stressed that any religion that is anchored in God is not evil and has something good about it and that, as Africans, we must incorporate our African ways in the Church and worship God as he inspires us to.

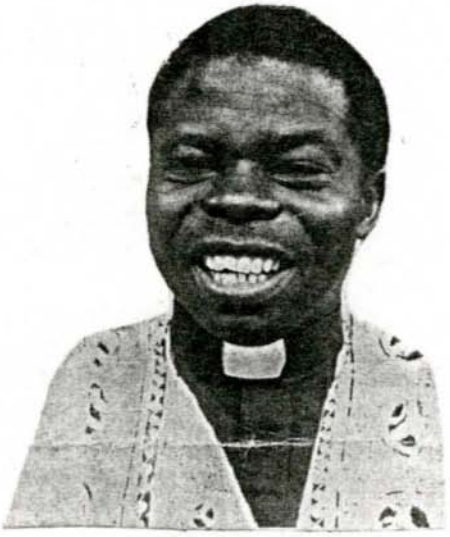
There were many questions asked by the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization membership. In responding to a question about female circumcision, Rev. Egbulem said, in part: "These rites of passage have been instituted to test the strength of the person to endure pain. When you have to live in the villages and know what the people are going through, it is better that you go through the pain and learn how to survive than not to endure the pain."

Among other questions asked were: What is the indigenous religion of your country? What has been the European/American influence on the way Africans in your country practice Christianity? What do you think about the cultural racism of projecting Jesus Christ, a person of color, as a Caucasian? What do you see as some of the similarities and differences between Africans in America and Africans in Africa? Do you thin the many different languages in Africa often create barriers for national and international progress and development?

Rev. Egbulem answered the questions with the wisdom of his knowledge and experience and Brother Ernest Spicer expounded on the need for churches to take a stand on moral principles and issues that affect the population. Brother Watson reminded us of the necessity for all of us to participate in our struggle for liberation.

Rev. Egbulem wrapped things up by re-emphasizing the importance of our learning that what we are doing as a people is trying to bring the best out of each one of us, and that we need to reignite something in this country--a peace in which we all can be respected.

-Kafele



Nwaka Egbulem

Back In Time

For the first time in American history black people were declared by federal law to be citizens of the United States. More important, the new law specifically made them the equal of white citizens.

And then, on March 27[1866], President Johnson vetoed the Civil Rights Act. It was not proper, he said in his message to Congress, "to make our entire colored population...citizens of the United States."...

His message to Congress reaffirmed the point of view that blacks had no rights--and that a white man could commit any crime against them...

In Memphis, Tennessee, the mayor, the sheriff, and the attorney general organized a conspiracy of city policemen. They intended to kill black soldiers who were living at nearby Fort Pickering while they awaited discharge from the Union Army...Most of the black soldiers heard about the plot in time to protect themselves inside Fort Pickering. The police mob--armed with rifles, shotguns, derringers, revolvers, and bowie knives--turned, in their rage, on every black person they could find.

Jackson Goodell, a 27-year-old wagon driver, was among the first to die. He had stopped in a grocery store on his way home from work. It was his bad luck to find two policemen there. They drew their revolvers and shot at him. But he turned and ran--ran out of the store and around the corner, directly into a mob led by a police sergeant on horseback.

The sergeant rose in his stirrups and screamed: "Kill him! Kill the nigger, all the God-damned niggers!" The two policemen on foot caught up with Goodell and clubbed him down. Later his wife Lavinia found his body on the floor of the police station. ..

Source: BROKEN PROMISES: THE STRANGE HISTORY OF THE 14th AMENDMENT by Richard Stiller

Announcements

The prison chapter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization meets approximately four times per month, on alternating Tuesdays and Saturdays. Our Saturday meetings run from 1-3 p.m. and the Tuesday meetings run from 6-8 p.m. We call upon members of the African community in the Omaha-Lincoln area to assist us in our main thrust--transforming "black" males to **African men.** If you are at least 19 years of age and are not on the visiting list of a prisoner here at this institution, you are eligible to participate with us. For more information, write to: Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization; P.O. Box 2500; Lincoln, NE.; 68542-2500. Or call 471-3161 between 1 and 2:45 p.m., Monday through Friday and ask for extension #3380.

Video tapes from Kemet Nu Productions: "The Theft Of Afrikan History And Spiritual Concepts," "Judaism: The Stolen Religion From Afrika," "Christianity: The Stolen Religion From Afrika," "The Cultural Destruction of Afrikan Fashions," "Egypt: From Cairo To Nubia." For ordering information, call Kemet Nu Productions at (214) 371-0206 or write to them at P.O. Box 41005; Dallas, TX; 75241.

Ujima Youth Theatre is offering African-American Creative Drama classes for 6- to 8-year-olds, 9- to 12-year-olds and teens. The purpose is to build strong African young people who are aware of their heritage and proud of their culture...Plays and poetry by and for Africans and African folktales will be a part of each class...Parents and friends are invited to join us to see what your child has learned. All classes are held at St. Paul United Methodist Church at 54th & Military. To register your child for classes, call 558-0920. Leave your name and your child's name and age.

OMAHA 1996(Cont.)

a cop deceased
looking just like judge and jurors
who see the death mask of his face
as they sit to decide the fate
of the brother who may or not
be the one who fired the shots
that caused the death they would avenge
while playing a game with justice
with fingers crossed
they smugly pretend
to presume the defendant's innocence
to impartially weigh the evidence
to find no guilt with reasonable doubt
but their agenda's set in stone
we would quickly find out
but should have already known
because someone had to pay
and what the bloody truth comes down to
is that just anyone's life would do.

-Mondo